

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

July 22, 2010

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
H-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
H-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

Today, the Senate Committee on Appropriations reported favorably an Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2011. At my request, the bill meets the recommended funding level included in the President's Budget to commence construction on coastal restoration in Louisiana. I write to urge that you include similar funding when the full House Committee on Appropriations considers its version of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2011.

For decades, the people of Louisiana have been fighting a battle to save the most productive working coast and delta in the world. We are losing 25 to 35 square miles of wetlands per year, which places millions of lives and critical national resources at alarming risk. To add to this crisis, these fragile coastal wetlands and fragmented barrier islands have been under assault from the oil that has been spewing uncontrollably from the BP Deepwater Well since the April 20, 2010.

Fortunately, the Senate legislation takes an historic step to begin funding the near-term coastal restoration work that has been developed over decades of planning and study. This critical work will be used to place dredge material beneficially in areas of the coast that have, for decades, been starved of the nutrient rich sediment carried in our waterways. Additionally, funding in this bill will expedite demonstration projects that may involve the diversion of river water to replenish fragile wetlands and restore critical habitat for birds and wildlife – some of which has been devastated by the BP oil spill.

I urge you to include \$35.6 million for coastal restoration projects as part of the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) program. Of these funds, \$19 million should be designated for new construction projects including beneficial use of dredge material, potential river diversion demonstration projects and funding to start construction on a host of projects authorized by the 2007 Water Resources Development Act.

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These funds are essential to fulfill President Obama's commitment to establish a lasting long-term restoration of the Gulf Coast and the fragile coast of Louisiana. I look forward to working with you on this important issue. If you have any questions or concerns with this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Projects Director, Tanner A. Johnson, at (202) 224-4833.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator

MLL/taj

cc: The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky, Chair
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Rodney Alexander, Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives